LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA
LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY ACT
FIVE-YEAR PLAN
October 1, 2002 - September 30, 2007

Introduction

The Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) is a federal program for all types of libraries and is administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). LSTA requires that each state library agency present a five-year plan. The following document covers the federal fiscal years from October 1, 2002 - September 30, 2007.

Since LSTA funds are used to support all types of libraries, the following reviews the current status:

Virginia Libraries

- **The Library of Virginia.** The Library of Virginia (LVA), established in 1823, serves as the archival and research library for the Commonwealth and has the responsibility "to give direction, assistance, and counsel to all libraries in the Commonwealth." Furthermore, the Library of Virginia is empowered "to engage in such activities in aid of city, county, town, regional and other public libraries as will serve to develop the library system of the Commonwealth ... and to administer and distribute state and federal funds in accordance with law and its own regulations." The Librarian of Virginia reports to a policymaking board of fifteen members appointed by the Governor. The collection of LVA includes 771,990 volumes, 363,874 AV materials, 653,870 federal documents, and 92 million documents/ archival items. Exemplary collections include records of Virginia government from the colonial period to the present including gubernatorial papers from Patrick Henry forward; a collection of original records from Virginia's county courts; a growing collection of private papers, including letters, diaries, journals, and other records documenting the everyday life of Virginians; and an extensive genealogical collection related to families with roots in the Commonwealth.

- **Virginia's Public Libraries.** Ninety public library systems serve the 7,078,515 residents. There are vast differences in the levels of services and resources provided due to widely varying economic and demographic conditions. Due to leveraging LSTA, Infopowering the Commonwealth and Gates Library Initiative funds and activities, all public library outlets have high-speed Internet connections in the approximately 350 buildings.

- **Virginia's Academic Libraries.** The 39 state-assisted colleges, universities and community colleges within the Commonwealth created a group-purchasing consortium (VIVA) in 1994. The continuing primary goals of VIVA are to enhance interlibrary loan functions throughout the Commonwealth and to support resource sharing, including shared electronic collections. Private colleges and universities also participate in VIVA.

- **Virginia's School Libraries.** There are more than 2,400 public and private school libraries in the Commonwealth. Due to different economic and demographic/geographic conditions, the school library media centers also present extreme differences in service and resource capacity.

- **Virginia's Special Libraries.** There are a wide variety of special libraries ranging from sophisticated research facilities operated by federal agencies, law firms, and manufacturers to small hospital and local business collections. Resources developed by the Library of Virginia and accessible electronically have already drawn compliments from many special libraries.

Mission

Vision Statement

The Library of Virginia will be the Commonwealth's leader in statewide library and archival information services and the world's foremost research and educational institution dedicated to the history and culture of Virginia.

Mission Statement

The Library of Virginia provides and preserves unique and comprehensive information resources and services for the citizens of the Commonwealth and the world.

The Library of Virginia recognizes and appreciates the many analogous purposes between its mission and LSTA. Historically LSTA funds have assisted LVA in achieving its mission. For this five-year period, the funds will continue to support Virginia's libraries.

Identified Need #1

- The library community needs to build strong leadership skills, to foster innovation and equity, to build cooperation and collaboration, and to cultivate increased visibility and stronger advocacy for libraries.

Needs Statement

The *Code of Virginia* §42.1 - 1 grants LVA the responsibility "to give direction, assistance, and counsel to all libraries in the Commonwealth, to all communities which may propose to establish libraries, and to all persons interested in public libraries as to the means of establishment and administration of such libraries, selection of books, retrieval systems, cataloging, maintenance, and other details of library management, and to conduct such inspections as are necessary." Furthermore, the Library of Virginia is empowered "to engage in such activities in aid of city, county, town, regional and other public libraries as will serve to develop the library system of the Commonwealth ... and to administer and distribute state and federal funds in accordance with law and its own regulations."

Equity of service is an ongoing concern and LVA leads the Commonwealth's libraries in fulfilling this commitment. In addition, it forces libraries of all types to consider the future, to prepare for that future, and to be successful with the resulting changes.

LVA works closely with the public library community as we continue to strive toward meeting Thomas Jefferson's goal of a public library in every county. The structure of public libraries in Virginia is relatively recent with many libraries established since the 1970's. Issues of governance, funding, library administration remain even though the newer issues of information overload and Internet dominate the meetings. Of the many different libraries in the Commonwealth, public libraries serve the greatest number of and types of users.

The Library of Virginia works closely with the 700 public and private museums throughout the state which in turn partner with local and state tourism offices. LVA works with the academic libraries via participation in the VIVA project. LVA works with the K-12 community through the database projects, youth services initiatives and encourages partnerships with public libraries. LVA is well represented in professional association activities, including, but not limited to the Virginia Library Association (VLA), the Virginia Educational Media Association (VEMA) and the Virginia Association of Museums (VAM). Continuing these partnerships and seeking other communities of interest is necessary if libraries are to meet the challenges posed by the modern society.

Goal

- The Library of Virginia will create opportunities for library leaders to build skills and will provide leadership and direct support for planning, evaluation, collaboration, advocacy, and professional development which foster and advance innovative responses from libraries to community needs.

LSTA Purpose

- Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats; developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, State, regional, national, and international electronic networks; targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth to age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line.

Targets

By 2003 present new professional librarian certification model to Library Board for review.

By 2004 complete revision of Planning for Library Excellence. By 2007 at least 50% of libraries engaged in long-range planning will report finding Planning for Library Excellence a useful tool in their planning process.

By 2007 complete and disseminate revision of Public Library Trustee Handbook to provide guidance in all issues of trustee boardsmanship.

Annually review constituent information/assistance requests from all types of libraries to determine patterns and identify topical issues for proper follow-up.

By 2007 complete review of all public library long-range plans.

Annually assist libraries in developing long-range plans. Conduct a minimum of two formal planning workshops per year. Conduct a post-workshop survey/evaluation of workshop participants as to enhanced services resulting from the planning process.

As necessary, offer training in outcome based evaluation processes as part of a program of targeted competitive grants.

Monitor and evaluate competitive grants using outcome based evaluation methodology, as applicable.

Activities

Update Planning for Library Excellence.

Update Virginia Public Library Trustee Handbook.

Update professional librarian certification program.

Monitor E-rate program including review and certification of technology plans.

Biennially collect and report on the Acceptable Internet Use policies of the public libraries.

Collect and disseminate statistics for use in improving library services.

Continue to serve as the "librarian's reference librarian" by answering requests for assistance from users including libraries and citizens.

Continue Infopowering and enhance FinditVA.

Serve as agent/contact for SOLINET and statewide resource sharing.

Continue to review long-range plans from Virginia public libraries.

Expand collaboration with all library communities and appropriate agencies, organizations, etc. to achieve progress in all other LSTA goals.

Outcome based evaluation training will be offered throughout the state for subgrant projects that require such evaluation.

As funding permits, develop and implement a competitive grant program, for all types of libraries, with priority for projects that foster cooperation and collaboration.

Identified Need # 2

- All Virginians, regardless of age, location, social or physical condition, or level of intellectual achievement require equitable access to quality library and information resources.

Needs Statement

- As previously stated, there are great differences among the school libraries and among the public libraries due to the diverse economic and demographic/geographic conditions. In *Planning for Library Excellence*, public libraries are grouped into planning profiles based on similarities. Profiles 1 and 5 are compared below:

Library Size: Small	Library Size: Large
Setting: Rural and Towns	Setting: Urban and Large Suburban Counties
Population: Low	Population: High
Diversity: Limited	Diversity: Extensive
Level of Service: Limited	Level of Service: High
Service Responses: 1-2	Service Responses: 5 or more
Outlets: One Site (Median)	Outlets: Nine (Median)

ALA MLS: 1	ALA MLS: More Than 30
Operating expenditures per capita:	Operating expenditures per capita
Median = $7.64	Median = $30.65
Materials expenditure per capita	Materials expenditure per capita
Median = $1.49	Median = $4.99
Median collection size = 28,129	Median collection size = 612,593
Staff expenditure per capita	Staff expenditure per capita
Median = $4.55	Median = $22.07

Fairfax County Public Library serves a population in excess of 900,000 individuals in 402 square miles near Washington, D. C. Highland County Public Library serves a population of less than 2,600 individuals in 416 square miles on the border of West Virginia. Both counties are nearly identical in geographic size, but their demographics represent the state extremes.

K-12 school funding also represents extremes. The statewide average cost per pupil (all funding sources) for FY01 was $7,657, but Arlington County in northern Virginia spent $12,266 per pupil while Warren County in the northwest spent only $5,900. For local funds only, the data are similarly spread. Lee County, deep in the southwestern portion of the state, spent only $770, while Falls Church, an affluent city in northern Virginia, spent $9,982 per pupil. Differences in the school media center resources mirror these extremes.

The provision of high-quality commercial databases is viewed as an essential component to assist in "leveling the playing field" for all library users. The support of all library communities for the databases was made clear in both the five-year evaluation process and throughout the public hearings on this plan. Providing funding for the databases was the second highest supported use of the money.

However, Virginia library users need more than commercial databases. To ensure relevant and equitable access to quality library and information resources, the Library of Virginia must continue to select, develop, present, and maintain unique Virginia-related digital collections in close cooperation with community public library, museum, historic site, and other cultural and educational organizations. History is one of Virginia's leading assets, both in defining ourselves and in attracting tourism. The Library of Virginia is a key guardian of our heritage as the state archives and as a critical resource for genealogical research. It is particularly critical that the Library and its project partners continue to refine cost-effective collection selection, processing, and preservation methodologies and to employ all applicable standards for resource discovery and networking to ensure effective access to information materials.

Goal

- All Virginians will have improved access to quality library and information resources and services that help develop skills for and provide support for responding to changing needs, opportunities, and environments.

LSTA Purpose

- Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats; developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks; targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth to age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line.

Targets

By June 2007, at least 50% of surveyed users of public education materials will indicate the materials were useful to very useful.

Annually monitor impact of use of electronic resources by user group (K-12, distance learner, home schooler, college student, public library user).

By 2004, results from surveys, focus groups, and other methods will indicate that at least 50% of the participants from the identified constituent groups will state that the collections were "useful" to "very useful" in supporting their activities.

By 2005, results of the cost-benefit analysis will indicate that a savings of more than 40% was realized due to the availability of the online collections over the cost of serving the same materials via on-site or surface-mail methods.

By 2006, results from surveys, focus groups, and other methods will identify and document 3 successful models of partnering/consulting and will assist in developing a formal set of measurement tools to determine the benefits of such arrangements to both the partnering institutions and the Library of Virginia.

Monitor and evaluate competitive grants using outcome based evaluation methodology, as applicable.

Activities

Choose and license comprehensive databases for full-text electronic resources for the residents of Virginia. Continuously review existing database content and prioritize needs for new or different resources.

Schedule, publicize, and conduct workshops in effective use of the databases for library staff.

Collaborate with TechRiders to offer public training on the use of electronic resources.

Develop public education tools and materials on the effective use of electronic resources.

Implement a series of appropriate measurement activities (such as surveys and focus groups) targeting the Library's diverse constituent groups, such as practicing historians and educators, researchers, library, museum and historical society service providers, and family history practitioners, to assess the impact of availability of digital collections on their activities.

Conduct a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis of the activities and costs associated with the production and provision of at least 20 digital projects, utilizing historical usage data from date of release of the collections, to assess the unit cost savings associated with serving the collections online vs. more traditional approaches (e.g. on-site and surface-mail) with the same level of use.

Construct and conduct surveys of current and potential partners such as national digital programs, public libraries, museums, historical societies, universities, and other appropriate organizations and institutions, to assess the current and future level of collaborative digitization activity and consulting.

Develop and implement a marketing plan to increase awareness of library and information resources.

Investigate options, plan, and implement competitive grant programs (as funds allow) to continue to improve access to underserved and persons with difficulty using a library, such as, but not limited to disabled, visually handicapped, individuals living below the poverty level, etc.

Identified Need # 3

- Virginia youth require both access to traditional and technological library resources and services, as well as the skills to use those resources and services effectively.

Needs Statement

In Virginia, children are the group most likely to live in poverty. The number of children receiving free and reduced lunches at school is 348,880 or nearly one third (32%) of the school aged population of approximately 1.1 million. The average poverty level in Virginia for all age groups is 7.8% and the average aggregate number of children living in poverty under the age of 18 according to the U. S Census for 2000 is 16%. By recent estimates, the percentage of children living in poverty is above the national average in 87 out of a total of 135 municipalities in Virginia.

Despite the initiation of educational standards several years ago, significant numbers of children fail to meet minimum educational goals. In 2001, 40% of students in grade 3 failed to pass the English test, 32% failed in grade 5, and 30% in grade 8. For grades 5 and 8 the failure rate for the social studies test was nearly 50%.

According to the national Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) for 2000, only 14% of children eligible for free or reduced lunches scored at or above the proficient level, as compared to 41% of non-eligible students.

Assistance must also be given to families, as often low-income parents lack the education and ability to fulfill their role as their child's first teacher. Children whose parents are at low literacy levels are not able to provide basic emergent literacy skills to their children, who then enter kindergarten without the necessary abilities for educational progress.

Goal

- All Virginia youth will experience improved traditional and technological library services and programs that are targeted to enhance academic performance and to develop the strong information literacy skills necessary for the digital age.

LSTA Purpose

- Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations; targeting library services to persons of diverse geographic, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills; targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth to age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line.

Targets:

During the evaluation period ending June 2007:

Annual statewide summer reading program will expand by developing partnerships with agencies serving children with disabilities and with public schools, especially those with high percentages of children receiving free and reduced price lunches. Participation target of 306,000 children, or 1/3 of the total population aged 5-14 will be achieved. Libraries will fill out annual evaluations, and surveys will be obtained from a sample group of participants and their parents.

Training in providing family literacy services and developing community partnerships will be presented to staff from 75 % of libraries serving populations with 16% or higher poverty levels. Family literacy services provided by libraries will be tracked and participating families will fill out evaluations.

A minimum of two grant-writing workshops designed to help libraries with funding for family literacy projects will be offered statewide. Success of attendees in procuring grant money will be tabulated and completed projects will be evaluated.

Libraries will expand services to children in their community who are living in poverty.

Libraries with significant underserved populations will provide improved services to those groups.

Underserved families living in poverty will increase their literacy skills.

Libraries will improve their ability to respond to community needs in the area of family literacy.

Monitor and evaluate competitive grants using outcome based evaluation methodology, as applicable.

Activities:

Offer a statewide summer reading program for children and teens.

Improve promotion of statewide summer reading program to underserved groups.

Provide training to libraries about family literacy programs and services.

Offer workshops to libraries on how to help low literacy parents develop skills for parenting literacy.

Assist libraries in partnering with the Family Literacy Consortium for improving patron access to literacy services.

Provide information to libraries on how to serve children with disabilities and network with service providers for improved access.

Promote reading aloud through statewide celebration of Read Aloud to a Child Week.

Provide training to libraries to improve their curriculum support capabilities.

As funding permits, develop and implement a competitive grant program with priority for collaborative projects.

Identified Need # 4

- Library staff need on-going training to foster the continuous development and improvement of library services statewide.

Needs Statement

The need for on-going training results from a combination of circumstances: the need to constantly learn new skills and/or the need to train new hires since staff turnover is frequent. Virginia has no library school and thus no obvious partnerships for continuing library education. LVA works with the Virginia Library Association, SOLINET, the Virginia Educational Media Association, Virginia Association of Museums, and others to offer workshops across the state. Furthermore, due to the size of the state, it is necessary to offer the same workshops in multiple locations.

Of the public libraries, approximately 25% have only one professional librarian. Overwhelmingly the front-line staff who first represent the agency and serve the user rely on training provided directly or indirectly by LVA. The certification model to be developed may include renewal based on continuing education credits and if so, there will be significant impact on training needs.

The public schools have similar issues in library training and frequently seek cooperative venues. Their certification procedures already require continuing education credits for re-certification.

Goal

- Appropriate library staff will have access to training opportunities in order to improve library services, make effective use of new technologies, implement planning and evaluation programs that incorporate leading contemporary methodologies and skills, and create exceptional cutting-edge library services for all Virginians.

LSTA Purpose

- Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats; developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, State, regional, national, and international electronic networks; targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth to age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line.

Targets

Annually at least 10 staff from each of the 6 Virginia Library Association geographic regions will attend relevant topical workshops.

At least 50% of workshop participants will indicate using at least two new skills.

Annually, at least 50% of the libraries with boards will send a representative to the trustee workshops.

At least 50% of trustees who attend the training will indicate services to their communities were improved as a result of information gained at the workshop.

Annually, at least 70% of the directors will attend or send a representative to the directors meeting.

At least 50% of the directors who attend the directors meeting will indicate services to their communities were improved as a result of information gained at the workshop.

Monitor and evaluate competitive grants using outcome based evaluation methodology, as applicable.

Activities

Annually offer a minimum of three workshops for public library trustees across the state. Topics will be determined by annual assessment including evaluations from each workshop.

Annually sponsor or co-sponsor a topical workshop in each of the 6 VLA regions. Topics will be determined by annual assessment including evaluations from each workshop.

Annually sponsor a public library director's meeting to discuss current library issues, provide topical programs, and request feedback on LVA activities including the LSTA program. A pre-meeting survey determines the topics.

By 2005, provide regional workshops on the outcome based evaluation process.

As funding permits, develop and implement a competitive grant program, for all types of libraries, with priority for projects that foster cooperation and collaboration in continuing education.

Stakeholder Involvement/Summary of Planning and Implementation Procedures

As permitted under the federal law, an LSTA Advisory Council has been appointed to assist the Librarian of Virginia. Representatives include academic (public, private), K-12, public, special, institutional, and museum libraries. The council meets no less than twice per year. Council members participated in many phases of this plan, including the statewide public hearings. The LSTA Advisory Council also plans the categories, reviews, and scores all competitive grants offered. The Council chairman presents recommendations at the meetings of the Library of Virginia Board.

In June, public hearings regarding the proposed plan were held in six locations:

Henrico County (Central/Southside Virginia)
Spotsylvania County (Northern Virginia)
City of Hampton (Tidewater/Hampton Roads Virginia)
Town of Marion (Southwest Virginia)
Roanoke County (Central/Western Virginia)
City of Harrisonburg (Northwest Virginia)

Notice of the hearings was publicized on the website and through various listservs. With the exception of the museum community, representatives of all types of libraries in Virginia attended the hearings and presented their opinions on most needed services. Comments and suggestions from the hearings have been used in the development of the plan. Especially valuable were the comments and suggestions received from the LSTA Advisory Council members.

The Library of Virginia works very closely with the various library communities at all times. Each community is made aware of LVA activities, including LSTA, by LVA staff attendance at meetings, websites, presentations, or special contacts. The following lists some of the Virginia library groups regularly contacted by LVA: SNUAB (State Networking Users Advisory Board) members are appointed by the Governor to advise LVA on networking issues. Virginia Library Association, representing all types of libraries, provides legislative advocacy. The Virginia Public Library Directors Association (VPLDA) is also an active voice. The Virginia Educational Media Association (VEMA) serves the school libraries and hosts both an annual and regional conferences each year. The library committee of the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia (SCHEV) and the VIVA Steering Committee represent academic libraries. Special Library Association is active as well. SWING (Southwest Information Networking Group) is a multi-type organization. Public library directors groups meet regularly in each region to discuss common issues. Among these groups are Capitol Area Library Directors (CALD), Tidewater Area Library Directors (TALDC), Three Rivers Library Directors (Northern Neck region), Mountain 6 (Upper Valley), Wild Turkey (Southwestern), Washington Institutional Library Directors (WILD), and Southside Area Library Directors (SALAD).

Library Development and Networking (LDND) and Collection Management Services (CMS) staff are involved in many phases of LSTA projects. Site visits, planning visits and training take place throughout the years.

Communication Procedures

LVA maintains an active website (www.lva.lib.va.us) to communicate "Who We Are, What We Have, and What We Do." With a recent redesign of the website, information on LSTA (and all library initiatives) can be found, logically, under "What We Do." Continuous development and refinement of the website is planned. LSTA materials posted (or to be posted) include LSTA Advisory Council, Five Year Plan 1997-2001, Evaluation of the 1997-2001 Plan, Five Year Plan 2002-2007, and links to the IMLS including LSTA legislation. Our annual evaluation, lists of approved grants, and similar pertinent information will be posted.

LVA also maintains a public library extranet (www.vpl.lib.va.us) for faster and more informal communication. We are evaluating several programs (including LSTA) to determine the best methodology for sharing the information.

As noted above, LVA staff are very active in statewide programs. Most committees or speaking engagements include a topic of "State Library Updates." A great deal of feedback is thus received directly from the users to the service providers.

Other opportunities to communicate include posting to the various listservs maintained by the library groups and by LVA.

Monitoring Procedures

Monitoring remains both an on-going and specific process. On-going monitoring includes the types of activities listed above and regular contact with the library communities. Specific activities include the annual report, LSTA Advisory Council meetings and reports from the subgrantees.

Both output and outcome measurements have been cited throughout this document. As part of the annual reporting process, LVA will determine and report progress toward the goals as necessary. As part of the planned five-year evaluation, LVA will undertake a mid-term review to be sure the most worthy needs are still being addressed. Any substantial changes to the five-year plan will be submitted to IMLS for review, as required.